

Re: Docket No. 98N-1038, "Irradiation in the Production, Processing, and Handling of Food" 6281 '99 JUL 22 A9:43

To whom it may concern:

I am extremely concerned about the prospect of weakening or eliminating the labeling requirements for irradiated food. Any foods, or any foods containing ingredients, not have been treated by irradiation, should be clearly labeled with a written statement on the principal display panel indicating such treatment. The statement should be easy to read and placed in close proximity to the name of the food and accompanied by the radura, the international symbol of irradiated food. If the food is not packaged, this information should be clearly displayed on a poster in plain view and adjacent to where the product is displayed for sale.

Like other labels required by federal law, irradiation labels must be truthful and not misleading. Proposals to use euphemistic phrases like "cold pasteurization" are inappropriate because pasteurization is an entirely different process involving rapid heating and cooling. The terms "treated with radiation" or "treated by irradiation" are appropriate because they accurately portray the irradiation process. The radura symbol, without written disclosure is not adequate.

Besides concerns about treated food, we must address issues with what is done with the radioactive wastes left over from the irradiation process. There are no permanent disposal sites for waste materials. Radioactive isotopes remain dangerous for hundreds to thousands of years and we have nothing that can contain them for that long. This is one reason why the government stopped building nuclear power plants. Recently in a part of Maryland the drinking water

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JUL 20 11 35 AM '99 became contaminated by a sewage leak and some people  
the water became sick. How much worse  
could this have been if it was a radioactive leak.

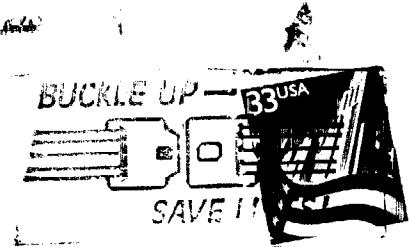
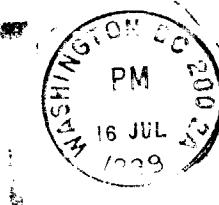
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Consumers have a right-to-know how their food has been processed.  
Please ensure that labeling requirements are strengthened, not  
weakened.

Sincerely,

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